

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action mailed on June 4, 2007. Claims 12, 13, 27, 28, 45, 46, 55, 60 and 61 have been canceled. Claims 1, 4, 14, 19, 22, 29, 34, 37, 47, 52, 53, 56 to 59, and 62 to 66 have been amended. New Claims 68 to 83 have been added. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments.

A Request for Continued Examination, a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, and a Petition for a two-month extension of time are submitted herewith. Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 to cover the cost of the RCE, the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, the extension of time, and any other fees which are due in connection with this Response.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1, 3 to 19, 22 to 34, 37 to 53, and 55 to 67 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,833,537 to Barrie ("Barrie") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,315,660 to Demar et al. ("Demar"). Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections. Additionally, Applicants have amended certain of the claims for clarity.

Barrie is directed to a gaming device which provides a primary game having a primary set of reels, each of the reels including a plurality of symbols. A player initiates a round of the Barrie game by making a wager and activating the reels. If a designated symbol appears in a particular position after a spin of the reels, the gaming device displays a persistent symbol (Col 3: 46-51). In one embodiment, the persistent symbol occupies the same position as the gaming symbol that triggered its appearance. In another embodiment, the persistent symbols operate in conjunction with another game, such as a bingo game associated with the reels. In one such embodiment, each of the paylines associated with the primary set of reels corresponds to a bingo card. When a predetermined event occurs on the reels, such as the occurrence of a specific symbol or symbol combination on one of the paylines, markers are placed on the sections of the bingo card corresponding to that payline. To accumulate enough markers on the bingo card to win a prize associated with the bingo card, a player must continue placing wagers on and playing successive rounds of the primary game. The player can play as many rounds as it takes to obtain all the sections on the bingo card, or the player can stop playing before completing the card and, thus, forfeit any progress he or she has

made in the bingo game. In this manner, Barrie encourages players to play multiple rounds of the game.

Demar discloses a gaming device which provides a primary reel game and a bonus game including a plurality of selection elements. In one embodiment, when the bonus game is triggered, the gaming device randomly selects one of the selection elements. Each of the selection elements is associated with a multiplier or a fixed value. After the gaming device selects one of the selection elements and determines the multiplier or value associated with that selection, the gaming device modifies the outcome resulting from the reel spin in the primary game by the multiplier or value that is selected in the bonus game. For example, if the player's reel spin in the primary game results in an award of 10 credits, and the selection element chosen in the bonus game is associated with a value of 25, the gaming device provides the player a total award of 35 credits (i.e., 10 plus 25). In another example, if the player's reel spin in the primary game results in an award of 10 credits, and the selection element chosen in the bonus game is associated with a 4X multiplier, the gaming device provides the player a total award of 40 credits (i.e., 10 x 4).

The Office Action acknowledges that Barrie does not include a multiplier for a section game outcome combined with free spins (Office Action, page 4). However, the Office Action proposes that the use of a multiplier in a bonus game, as taught by Demar, is tantamount to the use of a multiplier on a section outcome combined with free spins. The Office Action concludes that incorporating this bonus game feature of Demar into the Barrie game would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to provide an additional payout means (Office Action, page 5).

Regardless of whether it would have been obvious to add the multiplier feature of Demar's bonus game into the gaming device of Barrie, the proposed combination would not achieve the gaming device of amended independent Claim 1. Unlike the gaming device of amended independent Claim 1, Barrie and Demar, either alone or in combination, do not teach, disclose or suggest a processor programmed to (1) provide a predetermined number of free spins to a player upon an occurrence of a triggering event, the predetermined number being at least two, and (2) if all of the sections are obtained within the provided number of free spins (i) display the section outcome

associated with the plurality of sections to the player, and (ii) provide the section outcome associated with the plurality of sections to the player, wherein the section outcome is modified by the modifier.

As discussed above, in one embodiment of Barrie, a player earns markers on a bingo card when designated events occur in rounds of a primary game. Markers earned in one round of the primary game remain on the bingo card for subsequent rounds of the game. Each round played is an opportunity for the player to obtain markers for the bingo game. Barrie discloses that the player can choose to play as many rounds as it takes to accumulate enough markers on the bingo card to win the award associated with the bingo game. Thus, Barrie does not disclose providing a predetermined number of free spins (i.e., a predetermined number of opportunities to earn markers) to a player, wherein if all of the sections are obtained within the provided number of free spins, the section outcome associated with the plurality of sections is displayed and provided to the player.

Demar also does not disclose this element. As a primary matter, Demar does not include a section outcome associated with the plurality of selection elements of the bonus game. Rather, individual selection elements are associated with multipliers or values. As illustrated in Figs. 1, 3, 8, 10, 14, 16b, and 18 of Demar, the multipliers or values associated with the individual selection elements are displayed on the bonus game board at all times. Each time one of the selection elements is selected, the player is provided with an award based on the outcome of the reel spin and the multiplier or value associated with the selection element selected in the bonus game. Therefore, Demar does not disclose providing a predetermined number of free spins to a player, wherein if all of the sections are obtained within the provided number of free spins, the section outcome associated with the plurality of sections is displayed and provided to the player. Accordingly, Demar does not remedy the deficiencies in Barrie.

Moreover, Barrie teaches away from the inclusion of a predetermined number of free spins provided to a player, wherein if all of the sections are obtained within the provided number of free spins, the section outcome associated with the plurality of sections is displayed and provided to the player. Barrie does not contemplate limiting the number of rounds that the player can play in attempt to win the outcome, or award,

associated with the bingo game. Through its use of symbols that persist from one round to another, Barrie encourages players to play as many rounds as necessary to win the award. Accordingly, Barrie teaches away from providing a predetermined number of free spins of the reels within which a player must obtain all of the sections to win the section outcome.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are each in condition for allowance.

Amended independent Claims 19, 34, and 52 each include certain similar elements to amended independent Claim 1. For at least the reasons discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 19, 34, and 52 and the claims depending from amended independent Claims 19, 34, and 52 are each in condition for allowance.

The Office Action rejected Claims 2, 3, 20, 21, 35, 36, and 54 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barrie in view of Demar, in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,449,173 to Thomas. Applicants respectfully submit that the patentability of amended independent Claims 1, 19, 34, and 52 renders the rejections of Claims 2, 3, 20, 21, 35, 36, and 54 moot.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and in the absence of more pertinent art such action is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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